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# A Conductor's Analysis and Interpretation: Norman Dello Joio's Variants on a Mediaeval Tune, Steven Bryant's Dusk, and Jerry Bilik's American Civil War Fantasy

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A WIND CONDUCTOR'S ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:  
NORMAN DELLO JOIO'S *VARIANTS ON A MEDIAEVAL TUNE*, STEVEN BRYANT'S  
*DUSK*, AND JERRY BILIK'S *AMERICAN CIVIL WAR FANTASY*

by

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A Research Paper  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Music Degree.

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A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Music

in the field of Instrumental Conducting

Approved by:

Dr. Christopher Morehouse, Chair

Dr. Susan Davenport

Dr. Eric Mandat

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
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TITLE: A WIND CONDUCTORS ANALYSIS AND INTERPREATION: NORMAN DELLO JOIO'S *VARIANTS ON A MEDIAEVAL TUNE*, STEVEN BRAYNT'S *DUSK*, AND JERRY BILIK'S *AMERICAN CIVIL WAR FANTASY*

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Christopher Morehouse

The purpose of this document is to provide scholarly information to accompany the graduate conducting recital of Thomas D. Richardson. Divided into three major components, each chapter discusses background information on the composer and composition, analysis of the work, and rehearsal considerations for the conductor. The pieces chosen are Norman Dello Joio's *Variants on a Mediaeval Tune*, Steven Bryant's *Dusk*, and Jerry Bilik's *American Civil War Fantasy*.

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## CHAPTER 1

NORMAN DELLO JOIO'S *VARIANTS ON A MEDIAEVAL TUNE***Composer Background**

The family name Dello Joio was well known to the residents of Gragnano, a wine producing area on the outskirts of Naples, Italy. Norman Dello Joio's father, Casimiro Dello Joio, was the organist at the village church, as well as being a competent flute player. His musical training from the Naples Conservatory earned him a position as a flutist on a United States Navy vessel docked in Naples. He then enlisted for a three-year term and was awarded an automatic United States citizenship. Casimiro finished his active duties, then settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and later New York, New York, where he met and married his wife Antoinette. On January 24, 1913, Antoinette gave birth to their only child, Norman.<sup>1</sup>

Starting at a young age, Casimiro taught Norman piano and organ to carry on with family tradition.<sup>2</sup> Described as a rigorous teacher, Norman's lessons included music theory, sight singing, and ear training. Together they often played four-hand piano arrangements of orchestral works by Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and Stravinsky. The exposure to these composers proved to be valuable in many aspects of Norman's career. In particular, Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* made a significant impression on him. The "Petrouchka chord," an F-sharp and C major triad sounding simultaneously is prominent in many pieces by Dello Joio and will be discussed in a later section.

Dello Joio's father also exposed him to an enormous amount of Italian opera. As part of his duties as a coach for the Metropolitan Opera, Casimiro often had singers and instrumentalists

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Bumgardner, *Norman Dello Joio* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Company, 1986), 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

at their residence. The constant exposure to the music of Verdi and Puccini, among other Italian composers, greatly influenced him. His appreciation for Italian opera is one of the reasons Dello Joio spent much of his early career as an opera composer, and why he today is known as a lyrical composer in all media.

Growing up in New York City, Dello Joio was also influenced by the active popular music community. He listened to the popular music of the 1920s. George Gershwin, the music of tin pan alley, and jazz portrayed the vibrant, fast paced city life that influenced him musically and personally. Dello Joio formed his own group that played for parties and events around the city emulating the jazz rhythms of the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>3</sup> Dello Joio realized “the more a composer lives in the world around him, the more his music reflects his world.”<sup>4</sup> This exposure gave him the practical knowledge of performing popular music of the day, which was in drastic contrast to the classical music training he received at home from his father.<sup>5</sup> This contrast in styles played a role in influencing his composing later in life.

Dello Joio began writing for band in 1963, after already being recognized as one of America’s outstanding composers for orchestra and film. Through his involvement with the Young Composer's Project in 1959, Dello Joio recognized the talent of young musicians in school band programs.<sup>6</sup> Dello Joio enjoyed interacting with young musicians and throughout his life worked with students in educational settings. He devoted much time to addressing concerns of range, balance, and articulation for school ensembles. Dello Joio's resulting pieces for band

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 3–4.

<sup>6</sup> Carl Fischer Music, “Norman Dello Joio Biography,” <http://www.carlfischer.com/fischer/dellojoio.html> (accessed January 8, 2013).

effectively use each section of the ensemble to showcase the expressive writing style for which he is well known.

In 1963, Dello Joio was commissioned by the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation to write a piece for the Duke University Band. To fulfill this commitment Dello Joio composed *Variants on Mediaeval Tune*. He based this piece on the sixteenth-century mediaeval tune, *In dulci júbilo*. This melody is used in the Christmas carol *Good Christian Men, Rejoice* and Johann Sebastian Bach's *In dulci júbilo*, BWV 729. This common early sixteenth-century organ variation provided Dello Joio with a familiar melody to write his first piece for band. He had been successful using the form of theme and variations in his orchestral works and he was just as successful in creating one for band. *Variants on Mediaeval Tune* consists of an introduction, theme, and five variations performed with little or no break between the variations. This piece is published by Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation, is approximately twelve minutes in length, and is listed as a grade five in the *Teaching Music through Performance in Band* series.<sup>7</sup>

### **Analysis**

*Variants on a Mediaeval Tune* consists of an introduction, theme and five variations. The five variations alternate between fast and slow tempi and each variation introduces a contrasting style using fragments of the *In dulci júbilo* melody. Dello Joio uses this melody and two original melodic ideas as connecting material in each variation. He also uses compositional techniques that alter the *In dulci júbilo* melody to create musical interesting changes between each variation. The use of extended harmonies, including ninths and elevenths, and quartal and quintal

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Spittal, "Teacher Resource Guide: *Variants on a Mediaeval Tune* by Norman Dello Joio," in *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*, vol. 1, 2nd ed., ed. Richard Miles (GIA Publications Inc., 2010), 761–62.

harmonies, enhance the musical character. He uses these harmonies to build tension toward the climatic moments in each variation.

In the introduction and presentation of theme, Dello Joio uses two original melodic ideas and the *In dulci jublio* melody. The work begins with a fanfare in the trumpets. This rhythm, two thirty second notes followed by a sixteenth note, can be heard throughout the piece and is the first of the original melodic ideas. The second idea, composed by Dello Joio, is major chords that include sevenths and ninths in the low brass, B-flat<sup>9</sup>, F<sup>9</sup>, and E-flat. Both of these ideas set up connecting material that will be used to support the *In dulci jubilo* tune in the following variations. The sixteen-measure theme is stated in solo woodwind instruments: piccolo, flute, oboe, B-flat clarinet, alto clarinet, and bassoon. These instruments trade off two or four measures of the tune in different paired combinations. At the conclusion of the theme, a five-measure restatement of the introduction material completes this opening section.

To create variation one, Dello Joio uses diminution and augmentation of the *In dulci jublio* melody. The variation begins with an eighth note ostinato in the first two measures. This ostinato is derived from the solo alto clarinet line in measures 18 and 19. He changes the original melody's rhythm to consistent eighth notes and adds a B-natural to complete a one measure repeated ostinato. Rhythmic variations of the *In dulci jubilo* melody are used in short fragmented motives that move through different instruments in the ensemble. A defining characteristic of the piece, even though the theme may not be heard at all times, builds to a climatic moment always present a theme fragment as the prominent voice. This happens twice in this variation alone, first at measure 42, then at again in measure 63.

Variation two begins with a two-measure percussion introduction that leads to a minor third motive stated by the trumpets. The trumpet fanfare rhythm, heard in the introduction, and

development of the minor third as an augmentation of theme, are the main thematic ideas of the variation. The minor third motive is heard in the low brass section as an ascending passage with an alteration to include a passing tone. At the same time the clarinets play descending scalar minor thirds that create contrary motion. Measure seventy-six is the first time the *In dulci jubilo* melody is heard in minor. Measure 80 restates the percussion introduction from the opening of this variation. He then builds to measure 89 where both the fanfare rhythm and extended harmonies, from the introduction of the piece, are heard at loud *fortissimo* dynamics. The variation ends with solo horn stating the minor third motive one more time with a trombone quartet as the accompaniment.

The piccolo and E-flat clarinet start the middle variation by quoting a condensed statement of the first four measures of the theme in measures 101 and 102. Dello Joio then introduces a new sixteenth note idea that moves between C major and F-sharp major chords. As discussed earlier in this chapter it is possible that Dello Joio borrows this idea from Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*. He uses C major and F-sharp major chords frequently throughout this variation and often as oscillating chords from beat to beat. This light variation is divided into four sections each demonstrating a unique character of the theme. The first section is a soft and rhythmic clarinet variation of the theme in measure 105. Second is a louder statement of the same clarinet melody but with a direct theme quote in the saxophone and trumpets in measure 113. After a few measures of connecting material, tubas play the third variation of the theme, which is passed to the upper woodwinds starting in measure 121. The fourth and final idea is a build of tension with scalar passages ascending to the conclusion of this variation, typical of Dello Joio's style.

The low reeds, alto clarinet, bass clarinet and bassoon begin variation four with a slow, chromatic and rhythmically altered theme. The first measure of this variation can be linked to the

thematic idea heard at measure 81 played by the bassoon and French horn in variation two. After the first four-measure phrase, Dello Joio uses augmented and diminished chords, with the extensions of ninths and elevenths, to transition into the main theme of this variation. Measure 151 introduces a legato open fifth melody on C and G that is closely related to the original *In dulci jubilo* melody. This melody begins on the same pitch of C, as the original theme, and has the same phrase structure of four measures. Rising to the same notes of B-flat in the second measure and then C in the fourth measure, it matches the first theme statement of the tune. The major difference is the meter signature; the original meter signature in measure 14 is six-eight time and in this variation it is three-four time. Melodically, variation four omits some of the stepwise motion heard in the theme and replaces it with repeated legato notes in both the first and third measure of the phrase, measure 151. Another increase in intensity and dynamics to the climax phrase begins in measure 155. He then repeats the phrase from measure 151, but now played at a fortissimo dynamic level. The last fourteen measures of this variation quote fragments of both the melody from the opening of this variation and the melody from measure 151. The variation ends with a low C major chord, which prepares the harmony of the final variation.

The fifth and final variation is fast, marked as *allegro gioioso*, fast and joyful. This three-four time variation is divided into four measure phrases throughout the entire variation and introduces a new voicing of the theme variation in each new phrase. In measure 189 new variation material enters as a descending parallel third, quarter note motive, over two measures. This motive can be heard for the first time starting in measure 189 in the clarinet and saxophone. In measure 235, the upper woodwinds and trumpets state the second phrase of theme in its entirety for the first time since the introduction and theme. Dello Joio continues with whole

statements of the returning theme but uses the parallel third quarter note motive as four measure transitions. Staying true to his roots as an organist he employs a fugue in measure 275 creating a final climax to measure 314. The final arrival of the tonic key of C major ends the piece on a large, full, and fortissimo C major chord.

### **Rehearsal Considerations**

The conducting approach to any piece of literature is divided into a few different areas that together will yield the best result. First, the conductor needs to identify the written rhythmic and harmonic difficulties that will be isolated in rehearsals. Second, they must address the consistency of technique and endurance that every ensemble encounters will be important to the structure of rehearsals. Third, a conductor will need to prepare appropriate conducting gesture to show style and character of each phrase. Together these rehearsal elements must be applied in a balanced and timely manner within the constraints of a concert performance cycle.

Due to the overall formal analysis of *Variants on a Mediaeval Tune*, the rehearsal process can also be broken down into sections. Many of the main musical ideas are introduced in the introduction and theme. Once the main ideas have a unified phrasing and style, all subsequent variations can relate to the introduction and theme. A conductor can then spend a limited amount of time on identical phrases, which allows him/her time to discuss variations to the main musical ideas more in depth. Rehearsing each variation as an individual idea that completes a whole, not only helps the ensemble understand how phrases relate to the whole piece but also keeps the conductor organized in rehearsal time management.

General considerations for the harmonic devices of *Variants on a Mediaeval Tune* are understanding and balancing extended and bitonal chords. In the introduction, the first two brass chords are extended chords including sevenths and ninths. The third brass chord in measure 3 is

an F-sharp minor chord with an added C-natural, over an E-flat major chord. The composer uses these extended chords and similar voicing in other extended chords throughout the piece to create tension. It is important to make sure that the ensemble understands its role within each chord. This will help the ensemble apply balance to future musical elements. The opening trumpet fanfare that happens on top of these three chords highlights a rhythmic figure that is used throughout the piece, two thirty-second notes followed by a sixteenth note. The first note must be well articulated and accented. This is done to aid in the execution of the thirty-second notes, to ensure that the subdivision is maintained. Careful consideration of tempo will aid the trumpets' articulation of this rhythm.

Dello Joio is consistent in his use of articulation, stylistic markings, and the overall character of each variation. These musical elements will determine the appropriate conducting gestures needed throughout this piece. An area of concern for a conductor is ending the theme while preparing the tempo change to begin the first variation. Dello Joio marked in the score for these sections to be *attacca* so the conductor should find the appropriate conducting gesture that effectively communicates the change in tempo and character. The preparatory gesture needs to clearly set the tempo so the percussionist playing snare drum can set the correct tempo and style for the rest of the ensemble. The beginning of the second variation can be troublesome for a conductor as well. The two-measure battery percussion introduction is much slower in tempo compared to the first variation. A slow controlled pattern by the conductor is necessary so the musicians can subdivide and place the thirty-second triplet rhythms in the correct place.

Stylistically each variation introduces a new character and that character is maintained throughout the variation. The one exception is in the fourth variation where Dello Joio contrasts a lyrical *cantabile* melody with a *grandioso* statement of the tune. Being able to portray both of

these characters while maintaining the *andante* tempo can prove challenging to both conductor and ensemble. Special attention should be given to not only the contrast of the two styles but the growth and decay from phrase to phrase. The support of tone quality and dynamics should guide the conductor toward what phrasing the ensemble can accomplish musically.

In the fifth and final variation, maintaining rhythmic accuracy while also maintaining a consistent tempo is most important. Rhythmic figures starting on beat two have the tendency to slow down in the low instruments. For example, the opening four measures in the low brass often slow down because lack of subdivision during the tied half note to quarter note, causing the half note to be played longer than notated. Later in the movement upper woodwinds have a four-measure hemiola that enters on weak beats two and three several times throughout. The tendency will be to rush and enter early then shorten the note lengths, causing the four-measure hemiola to pick up speed. Between the opposite tempi tendencies of the ensemble the conductor must find a consistent baton speed to help aid in controlling a constant tempo. This task is compounded with the difficulty of conducting the three-four meter signature in one dotted half note per measure, as indicated in the score. One must find supermetric patterns that fit each phrase of this variation. This will help to control baton speed and maintain a controlled tempo for the ensemble.

As always, the primary goal in ensemble performance is overall tone quality of the group and careful consideration of musical phrasing. Within *Variants on a Mediaeval Tune*, the ability to change characters from variation to variation is vital to obtain this goal. It is necessary to practice transitions between variations in order to capture the change in character. In performance of works of this length, endurance is another often-neglected consideration in rehearsals. After rehearsing variations separately a conductor can help an ensemble build

endurance by rehearsing multiple variations together until they can perform the entire piece with all musical elements like, dynamics and style, being obtained at the highest level.

The opportunities to teach musical concepts in this work undoubtedly make it a standard piece of literature for wind band. Dello Joio's compositional style lends itself to many great qualities for musical success. Being able to expose high school through college musicians to extended chords and classical form adds to the list of why this work is performed. Dello Joio's life and training as a classical, lyrical composer enhances his approach to composing for wind band. The thoughtfulness and dedication he took in preparing many works for wind band makes him a noted composer and is the main reason why his pieces, like *Variants on a Mediaeval Tune*, are performed frequently today.

## CHAPTER 2

STEVEN BRYANT'S *DUSK***Composer Background**

Steven Bryant has become a noted wind band composer in the early twenty-first century. His ability to pull from a variety of sources, including synthesized sounds to create a mastered balance of winds and electronics in his piece *Ecstatic Waters*, is one quality that makes his music appealing. Another appealing quality is his depiction of the three stages of night in the programmatic work, *Night Cycle*. Writing works for beginners to professional ensembles has earned Bryant recognition as a modern composer who maintains the ability to keep music interesting for any level ensemble.

Raised in Little Rock, Arkansas, Bryant's first interest in music started in school. He first joined band in the seventh grade as a saxophone player. His father was his first band director and together they enjoyed the musicality of wind band music. As Bryant entered high school he started composing with a particular interest in acoustic and electronic sounds. In 1990, his senior year of high school, he dedicated a six minute piece he composed to his senior class and it was performed on the spring band concert. From this point he decided to study music composition formally after graduation of high school.<sup>8</sup>

Bryant attended Ouachita Baptist University, a private liberal arts college in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, where he studied composition with W. Francis McBeth. McBeth, being a reputable composer of wind band literature, made a lasting impact on Bryant's composition style. He credits McBeth "with having significant influences on his approach to composing, especially in a

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<sup>8</sup> Steven Bryant, "Teacher Resource Guide: *Dusk* by Steven Bryant," in *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*, vol. 6, ed. Richard Miles (GIA Publications Inc., 2007), 339–42.

philosophy of economy of musical materials.”<sup>9</sup> Upon graduation he immediately enrolled in the University of North Texas to study with another well known contributor to wind literature, Cynthia McTee. Bryant completed his master’s degree and then moved to New York to study for one year with John Corigliano at the Julliard School of Music.

With the exposure to a variety of compositional styles and techniques from seven years of formal training, it is no surprise that Bryant is so versatile. Bryant has created works that incorporate electronics, a parody suite, program music, and lyrical melodies for all levels of musicians. His versatility is one of the defining qualities that earned him merit in composing for wind band. He has earned three National Band Association William D. Revelli Composition Awards for his works, *Radiant Joy* (2007), *Suite Dreams* (2008), and *Ecstatic Waters* (2010).<sup>10</sup>

### **Analysis**

The structure of *Dusk* is a simple arch form, which is divided into three sections. The A section is the first twenty measures and contains two main motives. The B section, beginning in measure 21, starts with the full ensemble playing together for the first time in the piece. The climax that follows, incorporates one of the main melodic motives from the A section at a very loud dynamic, making this moment unmistakable as the climax of the overall arching form. The return of the A section begins in measure 53, with statements of both main motives at soft dynamic levels, as heard in the beginning A section. Bryant begins and ends the piece with the same French horn solo and open fourth of F and B-flat. The root movement and chord structure of the two motives in which Bryant begins the piece, play an important role in the development of each section of *Dusk*.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 339–42.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

The flute, harp, and vibraphone begin the piece with a sustained open fourth, F and B-flat, in measure 1. The first thematic motive begins in measure 2 with the French horn solo. Bryant uses the motive of descending thirds as the main melodic idea for this piece. At the completion of this main idea in measure 4, the harmonic structure and tonic key remain ambiguous. Bryant uses a quartal harmonic sequence that allows the main motive to descend, like the sun descending, without feeling a complete resolution to a tonic key. It is not until the bass clarinet enters in measure 5, to join the B-flat clarinet solo, that a sense of root chord motion begins. This clarinet duet is accompanied by flutes and expands on the descending third motive. The second thematic motive in measure 13 is stated as a brass chorale, and is divided into ascending fourths in the trumpets and descending thirds in the French horns. This contrary motion harmonically moves from a B-flat major to G minor chord, then a quintal chord built on E-flat. As also seen in the first motive, Bryant combines major and minor chords with quartal and quintal harmonies to create chord progressions that give this piece a distinctive sound. These two motivic ideas complete the A section and continue in the B section with the added full band scoring.

The B section begins with all of the wind instruments, including harp and vibes, playing the descending third motive together. As previously stated, this is the first *tutti* ensemble moment of the piece. This is in contrast to the chamber style writing displayed in the A section. In measure 24, the French horn solo returns, written a fifth lower than before. From this point Bryant augments and fragments the French horn motive and voices it in different instruments, while building on an ascending E-flat scale. The climax of this phrase, in measure 32, again states a *tutti* descending third motive but only foreshadows the true climatic moment of the piece. Bryant demonstrates another one his compositional techniques in measure 36 by first augmenting

the rhythm of the French horn main motive to eighth notes and then repeating it four times consecutively. An ascending scale idea from the first phrases of the B section is heard in the upper woodwinds and vibes while the bass voice instruments quote the descending third motive. All of these ideas combined with a six measure *crescendo* leads to the climatic phrase in measure 42, also the loudest statement of the descending third motive. This statement is unique because it is the only one that is not descending quintal harmonies. Instead it is presented as major chords, A-flat, C, and D-flat, some of which include the seventh or ninth of the chord. Bryant concludes the B section with three statements of the third motive, each one two dynamic markings softer than the one before. He also helps release the musical tension by increasing the rhythmic durations, from eighth notes in the first of the three statements, to half notes by the third statement in measure 51.

The return of the A section begins a restatement of the brass chorale from measure 13, also the second main motive. In this statement however, a woodwind quartet plays the motive, flute and first B-flat clarinet play the ascending fourths while second and third B-flat clarinets and bass clarinet play the descending thirds. In measure 59, the final descending third motive is played by the low clarinets, harmonically returning to the open fourth, F and B-flat, that began the piece. The final statement of the first motive returns with solo French horn, doubled with solo euphonium, completing the arch form.

### **Rehearsal Considerations**

*Dusk* is slow and lyrical and as with any piece that is marked *largo, e molto legato*, the tempo and quality of sound in sustained notes will prove to be a challenge. Bryant uses open fifths and cluster chords as parts of his harmonic language, which can cause intonation difficulties. The rhythms used and the instrumental range requirements are within comfortable

levels for most players in the ensemble. This comfortable range allows for the musical phrases to flow very easily. However, the use of silences between phrases requires that careful attention be paid to the beginning and ends of notes. To address these musical elements a conductor must understand the phrase structure, harmonic movement, and potential intonation difficulties in order to best address them in rehearsal.

Sustaining a quality sound and performing the contrast in dynamic levels, ranging from pianissimo to fortissimo can prove to be difficult at the marked tempo of quarter note equals forty-four. The first area that will need attention is from measure 36 to the climax phrases in measure 42. This phrase and subsequent phrase should be performed with no breaks in musical line. Ensemble members will need to stagger their breathing in order to sustain the phrases needed in this section. The *crescendo* from an ensemble *pianissimo* to triple *forte*, adds to the challenge of maintaining a quality sound. The conductor should make sure the ensemble does not take a breath in measure 41 before the climax phrase, and should encourage the ensemble to maintain dynamic intensity through the completion of the phrase in measure 44. The second area to address is the final five measures of the piece. Here only a small number of woodwind instruments, solo French horn, and euphonium play until the end. This solo, chamber section requires individual members maintain breath support to complete the phrase. The clarinets and two flutes sustain through the final five measures holding a single pitch ending with a *fermata*. Their endurance of sustaining this note with control at the soft dynamic will determine how long to hold the final *fermata*.

Bryant's harmonic language in this piece ranges from an open fifth, which begins and ends the piece, to bitonal, quartal and quintal, and extended chords. Intonation within these harmonies will need attention in rehearsals. Bryant creates tone clusters by having each entrance

of a new pitch be sustained. The first introduction to this method is in measure 2, where the horn solo notes are outlined in the second and third flute parts, which then are sustained until measure 4. It is important to make an ensemble aware of this technique and teach them how to balance these moments. Another harmonic challenge appears in measure 21, which is also the first full ensemble *tutti* phrase. Bryant uses quintal harmonies, so spending rehearsal time tuning each fifth will ensure that intonation is consistent through these chords. Quintal harmonies return many times throughout this piece, and a conductor's analysis will be able to isolate these chords so that intonation can be addressed separately from major and minor tuning as necessary.

One of the most difficult aspects of an outstanding performance of this piece concerns beginning articulations and how players release notes into silence. Every phrase in this piece uses silence as a musical element. It is vital that the conductor show an active or tapered release based on the phrasing needs and overall sound quality. Even though every phrase uses silence, the phrase beginning at 42 should be given special attention. This is the only moment in the piece where the ensemble needs to release and rearticulate as a whole. First in measure 44, then again at measure 47, each moment of silence must carry the energy to the next phrase. It will be important for the conductor to get the ensemble to control the long *diminuendo* in measures 42 through 48.

Overall, the ability to read the notes and rhythms of this piece at first sight are easily accomplished by most ensembles. However, to obtain the musical demand of harmony, good intonation at a very slow tempo, and the clarity and consistency of articulations, requires a mature group. Bryant is known for his musically contrasting and dynamic compositions. *Dusk* is no exception and ultimately stands as a high quality piece of wind band literature.

## CHAPTER 3

JERRY BILIK'S *AMERICAN CIVIL WAR FANTASY***Composer Background**

American composer Jerry Bilik, born on October 7, 1933 in New Rochelle, New York, started to compose at a young age while in attendance of the National Music Camp at Interlochen. After obtaining degrees from the University of Michigan in music education and composition, he served as chief arranger for the U.S. Military Academy Band.<sup>11</sup> Bilik has written over fifty pieces for band ranging from ballads to marches. His most noted works include *American Civil War Fantasy*, *M Block*, and *M Fanfare*. All three of these compositions were written for the University of Michigan Marching Band. The *M Fanfare* is part of the historic pregame show performed at every home football game. Bilik has been a recipient of the annual composers award presented by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.<sup>12</sup>

Bilik taught at Wayne State University where he continued to compose, arrange, and conduct ensembles and after a successful teaching career, he moved to Los Angeles to write for film, television, and live productions. He has been a member of the creative team for Disney on Ice since its beginning. Currently he serves as the Vice President of creative development for Disney on Ice.<sup>13</sup> Bilik has arranged music for several popular television shows that including

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<sup>11</sup> United States Military Academy West Point, "Multimedia: United States Military Academy 200 year of excellence," [http://www.usma.edu/band/SitePages/vol\\_1.aspx](http://www.usma.edu/band/SitePages/vol_1.aspx) (accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> Roy Stehle, "Program Notes, Jerry Bilik," [http://www.windband.org/foothill/pgm\\_note/notes\\_b.htm#Bilik](http://www.windband.org/foothill/pgm_note/notes_b.htm#Bilik), (accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> United States Military Academy West Point, "Multimedia: United States Military Academy 200 year of excellence," [http://www.usma.edu/band/SitePages/vol\\_1.aspx](http://www.usma.edu/band/SitePages/vol_1.aspx) (accessed March 1, 2013).

*Starsky and Hutch* and *Charlie's Angels*. At the age of seventy-nine Bilik currently lives in Cabin John, Maryland.<sup>14</sup>

*American Civil War Fantasy* was written in 1961 as the final number for University of Michigan Marching Band halftime show incorporating mid-nineteenth century popular tunes. The beginning of this work sets the scene of pre Civil War America.<sup>15</sup> *Listen to the Mocking Bird*, *Camptown Races*, and *Dixeland*, which were popular minstrel songs, set the tone for a peaceful America before the upcoming conflict. With the sounds of drums, *John Brown's Body*, announces the first sign of conflict. With the war imminent, the South's rallying song *Maryland, My Maryland*, more commonly know by the title *Oh Tannenbaum* is heard, followed by the Union Hymn, *The Battle Cry of Freedom*. As both sides rally, thoughts of bravery are portrayed in the tune *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*. The march towards battle gives the soldiers time to recall many songs; one of them is the sentimental melody *Just Before the Battle, Mother*. The melody fades away and growing intensity leads to the first sight of the Northern armies portrayed by *Marching through Georgia*; then the Southern troops meet them with, *The Yellow Rose of Texas*. Multiple small quotes of previously heard tunes are used as the intensity builds to a loud cannon boom signifying the end of the war. This intensity dies away and *Battle Hymn of the Republic* slowly starts to unify the divided sides. As more instruments join the melody it becomes *grandioso*, "representing the spiritual hope for a peaceful and prosperous United States of America."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Jerry Bilik, *American Civil War Fantasy* (Wilwaukee, WI: Hal Lenoard Coporation, 2008).

### Analysis

The title, *American Civil War Fantasy*, perfectly describes the content of this piece. Ten American folksongs from the mid-nineteenth century depict the north and south during the period of pre-war through the Civil War. The word fantasy is derived from the sixteenth-century Italian term *fanastia* meaning a free production having no relation to fixed form.<sup>17</sup> Fantasies were considered an improvisation of familiar melodies by the performer, however, in this case, it is a medley of familiar songs from the nineteenth century, also including variations and interludes.<sup>18</sup>

As discussed earlier, this programmatic work was written to tell the story of a changing America during the Civil War. This piece is divided into three sections: pre-war minstrel songs, Civil War tunes from both northern Union and southern Confederate armies, and a concluding statement of *Battle Hymn of the Republic* that establishes a united America. A twelve-measure introduction of four musical incipits introduces tunes that will be heard later. The first melody, *Listen to the Mocking Bird*, published in 1855, was a popular song, which was danced to on the White House lawn when the president received word that the Confederate Army surrendered.<sup>19</sup> The original melody of sixteen measures, written in common meter, is divided into two phrases. Bilik uses the complete sixteen-measure melody but writes it in two four meter with a few rhythmic alterations. *Dixie*, originally composed by Daniel Emmett in 1860, became popular in

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<sup>17</sup> Dictionary of Music (London: Augener & Company, 1908), s.v. "Fantasia."

<sup>18</sup> Harvard Dictionary of Music, 4th ed., s.v. "Fantasia."

<sup>19</sup> Mark Aldrich, *Catalog of Folk Song Settings for Wind Band* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2004), 5.

New Orleans, which made it the rallying song for southern pride.<sup>20</sup> The most recognizable section of this tune is the first four measures, which Bilik uses. He then restates the final measures from *Listen to the Mocking Bird* while preparing for a harmonic change to *Camptown Races*. Composed by Steven Foster in 1850, this eight-measure tune was passed down by oral tradition.<sup>21</sup> This tune was originally in the key of C major, however Bilik transposes it to the key of D-flat major. Bilik rhythmically alters the first four measures of the tune creating syncopation. The second half of the phrase, beginning at rehearsal E, temporarily moves into three-four meter, again causing the recognizable melody to sound syncopated before returning to two-four meter to end the phrase. These three songs display the peacetime of America before the Civil War. From measure 88, an oscillating descending fifth in the timpani, string bass, and low reed instruments signifies the marching sounds of the approaching war.

The next collection of melodies represents songs of both the Union and Confederate armies as they march to war. The first song *John Brown's Body*, used as a Sunday school hymn in the early-nineteenth century, tells the unfortunate story of anti-slavery activist John Brown.<sup>22</sup> The thirty-measure tune contains verse and chorus, and was originally in six-eight meter. However, Bilik retains the two-four meter signature of the first three melodies to create a slower, solemn statement of the first fifteen measures of the original *John Brown's Body* melody. He also adds one-measure interjections of the *Dixie* tune that repeats in many different instruments throughout the ensemble. These interjections of a Confederate tune over *John Brown's Body* shows the conflict of melody and conflict of battle between opposing sides. This struggle is

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 7.

magnified in measure 130 when both *Battle Cry of Freedom* and *Maryland, My Maryland* enter at the same time. Bilik uses the third phrase from *The Battle Cry of Freedom* and the first phrase from *Maryland, My Maryland*. As the conflict grows, the key moves to A-flat minor in measure 145, with the introduction of *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*. First known as an Irish anti-war song it became popular when bandmaster Patrick Gilmore arranged and performed it during the Civil War.<sup>23</sup> The first phrase of the tune is introduced as a round between the low reeds and low brass and the upper woodwinds that enter two measures later. The woodwinds continue in measure 151 with the second phrase of the tune followed by a *ritardando* that leads into the reflective melody *Just Before the Battle, Mother*. Composed in 1860 by George Root, this twenty-four measure song was well known by both Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.<sup>24</sup> Bilik uses the first sixteen measures but without the dotted eighth sixteenth rhythms heard in the original. Instead, he replaces the dotted rhythms with eighth notes and also sustains the ends of phrases with longer note values than marked in the original. Underneath this melody the French horns quote the second phrase of *Battle Cry of Freedom*, followed by the trumpets playing the first phrase of *Home Sweet Home*. A four-measure introduction introduces *Marching Through Georgia*, a song composed by Henry Work during the Civil War.<sup>25</sup> Bilik uses the first eight measures of this melody with a rhythmic march ostinato that continues a statement to the Confederate song, *The Yellow Rose of Texas*. This love song composed in 1858 by an

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

anonymous author is thirty-two measures in length.<sup>26</sup> However, only the first eight measures are used in *American Civil War Fantasy*, and written twice as fast as the original.

The third group of songs sets the sense of war by using fragmented melodies from the previous section and layering them so that they overlap in a rapid succession. Starting in measure 217 short quotes of the previous melodies, including a new melody, *Jesus Loves the Little Children* in measure 219, begin the development section of the piece. A different melody enters every two or four measures overlap each other. The previously heard rhythmic ostinato returns, while the intervals between the quarter notes in the bass voice expands from a major third to a perfect fourth, tritone, minor sixth, major sixth, and minor seventh at the climax in measure 245. The solo canon shot marked in measure 246 signals the end of the war. At rehearsal O, *Battle Hymn of the Republic* returns in the French horn section, along with the first key of E-flat. Written by William Steffe in 1856, *Battle Hymn of the Republic* was set to new lyrics by Julia Ward Howe in 1859.<sup>27</sup> These lyrics quickly became known as the unifying theme to an America no longer at war. While only the first two measures of the original tune were heard at the beginning of the piece, the entire sixteen-measure melody is played in a *grandioso* style until the end of the piece, marking the unity of a new America.

### **Rehearsal Considerations**

*American Civil War Fantasy* is a collection of ten popular American tunes from the nineteenth century. Each song represents a different style and character that needs to be clear to an audience. Other than a few rhythmic alterations and syncopations, each tune is easily recognizable. Bilik incorporates most of the original songs as the melody with an easy rhythmic

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 12.

or chordal accompaniment. Achieving proper style and balance of each of the ten tunes is a primary goal in rehearsals. Once a general understanding of style is achieved, the next step would be to isolate the melodic motives that either interject or accompany the main melodies throughout this work. In the middle section of this piece, where tension is building and the imagery of war is present, many short quotes of previous tunes are frequent and will need to be heard in conjunction with the primary melody. The third consideration for rehearsals is managing tempi and key changes. A conductor should rehearse individual key sections to establish an appropriate tempo and style, but also rehearse transitions so that accidentals and key changes are well understood by each performer.

To rehearse proper style, the conductor can divide the tunes based on their role within the overall form of the piece. The first three songs, *Listen to the Mocking Bird*, *Dixie*, and *Camptown Races*, represent pre-war America and are happy, playful, and light. Close attention to accents, *staccato* marks and dynamics will easily portray that character of each melody. The next three tunes, *John Brown's Body*, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, and *Maryland, My Maryland*, are rally songs from both Confederate and Union armies. They all use dotted rhythms with heavy emphasis on each beat, to mimic the feel of marching. As with most marches, space between notes will help with clarity and rhythmic accuracy. This concept should be applied to the dotted rhythms and bass voice quarter notes of each melody in this section. The next two songs, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, and *Just Before the Battle, Mother*, are reflective tunes used immediately preceding the big battle. These melodies are in contrasting style, one triumphant marked *marcato* and the other solemn marked *legato*, which makes for easy recognition in the change of style between the two. Maintaining these styles through each section and exposing motivic fragments of returning melodies will be important in the rehearsals of this section. *Marching Through*

*Georgia* and *The Yellow Rose of Texas*, portray the two armies finally meeting in battle. Each melody is stately in character and accented in style. As stated earlier, clarity can be achieved by allowing space between notes. Also, observing the written dynamics will improve the clarity during this tense build to the climax of the piece. After a development of many tunes, the final melody is *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. The first statement is *piano* and *andante*, just like the opening of the piece, followed by a build to *maestoso*. Since this song represents the unity of America the style should be grand and patriotic. Careful consideration of *ritardandos* and maintaining tempi will ensure that the style continues through the final *adagio molto grandioso* and the *ritardando al fine*.

Throughout this piece the short quotes of familiar tunes play an important role. Some quotes are used as transitional material to a new section, while others are interjections. Bilik uses these small quotes throughout this piece, but there are a few that serve important roles and should be given special attention in rehearsal. The first quote is in the euphonium part, at measures 84 through 87. This quote is used as the melodic transition into the key change and can be easily covered by the sustained notes in the upper woodwinds. Proper balance is needed so that the baritone melody is easily heard. The one measure *Dixie* quote that moves through many woodwind and brass parts between measures 98 and 107 proves to be challenge. Each entrance must be strong, as well as rhythmically accurate, to make this interlude successful. As the dynamics get louder and compound rhythms become prominent after measure 227, it is important that all melodic quotes enter confidently, but don't over power the entrances of other tunes. The loudest ensemble moment begins at rehearsal N, the French horns and upper woodwinds have the last quotes that must be heard through the complex rhythms played by the

rest of the ensemble. Balance and rhythmic clarity will be essential in rehearsals to make sure that all of these quotes are heard prominently throughout this section.

Rehearsal considerations should be given to the key areas and tempo changes used in this work. For less experienced groups, allowing more rehearsal time in unfamiliar keys will be helpful. This piece uses the keys of, E-flat, B-flat, C, D-flat, and A-flat major, as well as F, A-flat, and G minor. More rehearsal time will be needed in the sections that also require a faster tempo with an unfamiliar key. With any group, the conductor must allow time to practice transitions from one key area to the next. The ensemble must be aware that not every key change is marked and that Bilik often uses accidentals within the tonal framework. Consideration to tempo changes is the final element that should be addressed in rehearsal. Even though the tempos marked are not challenging, rehearsing the changes so that both conductor and ensemble are comfortable will aid in a better performance. This eight minute piece exposes quality American music to performers and audiences. The style and character changes throughout this work, as well as the multitude of key signatures, make this an educational piece for any level ensemble.

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